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E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PINT, TU
SUBJ: POLITICAL TRENDS ANALYSIS: THE ECEVIT GOVERNMENT'S FIRST
HUNDRED DAYS -- AND THE NEXT

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1. SUMMARY: THE ECEVIT GOVERNMENT FACED MAJOR PROBLEMS
IN THREE AREAS WHEN IT ENTERED OFFICE: THE ECONOMY, FOREIGN
POLICY, AND DOMESTIC VIOLENCE. IN DOMESTIC POLITICAL TERMS ITS
PERFORMANCE HAS BEEN FAIRLY GOOD WITH RESPECT TO THE ECONOMY AND
FOREIGN POLICY. IT HAS SO FAR BEEN UNSUCCESSFUL IN DEALING
WITH THE DOMESTIC SECURITY PROBLEM AND THIS FAILURE IS A
MAJOR VULNERABILITY. ECEVIT WILL PROBABLY CONTINUE TO BE

ABLE TO CLAIM DOMESTIC POLITICAL CREDIT FOR HIS FOREIGN POLICY PERFORMANCE, ALTHOUGH THE POSSIBILITY OF CONGRESSIONAL DEFEAT OF THE EFFORT TO LIFT THE EMBARGO DARKENS AN OTHERWISE BRIGHT PICTURE. ON THE OTHER HAND, THE POLITICAL COSTS OF THE ECONOMIC AUSTERITY MEASURES WILL PROBABLY BEGIN TO HURT ECEVIT. THE BELLWEATHER IS LIKELY TO BE THE DOMESTIC SECURITY PROBLEM. FAILURE TO MAKE PROGRESS ON THIS ISSUE COULD THREATEN THE STABILITY OF THE ECEVIT GOVERNMENT OVER THE MONTHS TO COME.
END SUMMARY

2. INTRODUCTION.

A. IN DECEMBER 1977 BULENT ECEVIT MADE AN ALL-OUT EFFORT TO BRING DOWN THE DEMIREL GOVERNMENT. HE WON THE STRUGGLE, BUT THE VICTORY PRIZE WAS SOMETHING ONLY AN INVERTERATE POLITICIAN WOULD WANT--LEADERSHIP OF A COUNTRY FACING SEVERE PROBLEMS ON THREE FRONTS: ECONOMY, INTERNAL SECURITY, AND FOREIGN POLICY. THIS TELEGRAM ASSESSES, IN DOMESTIC POLITICAL TERMS, ECEVIT'S EFFORTS TO DEAL WITH THOSE PROBLEMS.

B. THE RECORD OF THE FIRST HUNDRED DAYS OF THE ECEVIT GOVERNMENT IS MIXED. ECEVIT'S CHIEF ACCOMPLISHMENT HAS BEEN TO INNEURVATE AN ENTRENCHED BUREAUCRACY AND FOCUS ITS ATTENTIONS ON THE THREE MAIN PROBLEM AREAS. HE HAS ALSO MANAGED TO PROTECT--AND EVEN ENHANCE--HIS
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IMAGE, DOMESTICALLY AND INTERNATIONALLY, AS A MAN WHO NOT ONLY KNOWS WHAT TURKEY'S PROBLEMS ARE BUT IS ALSO INTELLIGENT, INDUSTRIOUS AND IMAGINATIVE ENOUGH TO DO SOMETHING ABOUT THEM. HE AND HIS GOVERNMENT HAVE MADE SOME PROGRESS, PARTICULARLY WITH REGARDS TO FOREIGN POLICY AND THE ECONOMY (WHERE HE BENEFITTED FROM A RELATIVELY STABLE BUREAUCRACY AND THE GROUNDWORK LAID BY THE PREVIOUS GOVERNMENT), BUT IN OTHER AREAS THE GOVERNMENT IS STILL GETTING ITSELF ORGANIZED. MANY PERSONNEL ASSIGNMENTS REMAIN TO BE MADE, AND PROGRAM AND PLANNING DECISIONS IN SEVERAL AREAS ARE STILL BEING WORKED OUT BY THE NEW PEOPLE.

3. THE ECONOMY AS A POLITICAL ISSUE.

ON THE ECONOMIC FRONT ECEVIT HAS BEEN PARTICULARLY ACTIVE AND HAS HAD SOME EARLY SUCCESSES THAT HAVE BOLSTERED HIM POLITICALLY IN SOME AREAS BUT WILL PROBABLY HURT HIM IN OTHERS. AMONG HIS VERY SUBSTANTIAL ACCOMPLISHMENTS ARE: (A) THE FORMULATION OF THE OUTLINES OF AN ECONOMIC STABILIZATION PROGRAM WHICH INCLUDES NEW TAX PROPOSALS, A SUBSTANTIAL DEVALUATION, RESTRICTIVE MONETARY POLICIES, A DEFLATIONARY BUDGET, AND SOME EFFORTS AT PRICE CONTROLS; (B) A STAND-BY AGREEMENT WITH THE IMF; (C) AN EXPECTATION, AFTER

TALKS WITH IBRD PRESIDENT MCNAMARA, THAT THE WORLD BANK WILL PROVIDE NOT ONLY EXPANDED PROJECT LENDING BUT ALSO \$200 MILLION IN PROGRAM CREDITS (ALL OF WHICH WAS ACCENTED BY WORLD BANK PRESIDENT MCNAMARA'S PUBLIC PRAISE OF THE GOVERNMENT'S EFFORTS AS "POLITICALLY COURAGEOUS" AND WISE); (D) AN EXPECTATION AFTER CONSULTATIONS WITH A GROUP OF MAJOR COMMERCIAL BANKS THAT THEY WILL RESCHEDULE \$2.5 BILLION IN OVER DUE (OR NEARLY DUE) DEBT AND TRY TO ARRANGE FOR A NEW LOAN OF \$300 MILLION; (E) A PRELIMINARY UNDERSTANDING WITH LIBYA FOR FINANCING PART OF TURKEY'S PETROLEUM PURCHASES--AND PERHAPS FOR A HEFTY PROGRAM LOAN; AND (F) ACTIVE CONSIDERATION OF ADDITIONAL ASSISTANCE BY OTHER FRIENDS AND ALLIES, INCLUDING THE US AND THE FRG. THE INITIAL DOMESTIC IMPACT OF MOST OF THESE MEASURES HAS BEEN POSITIVE, BUT THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE RETRENCHMENT PROGRAM IN PARTICULAR WILL

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ENTAIL POLITICAL COSTS THAT WILL NOT BE OFFSET BY EXPRESSIONS OF INTERNATIONAL APPROVAL, NO MATTER HOW GRATIFYING THOSE MAY BE.

4. DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

A. THE INTERNAL SECURITY PROBLEM THAT THE ECEVIT GOVERNMENT FACED UPON ENTERING OFFICE WAS A STAGGERING ONE.

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SEEMINGLY RANDOM POLITICAL VIOLENCE WAS TAKING A TOLL OF THREE OR FOUR LIVES EACH WEEK. SECURITY FORCES WERE DISORGANIZED, DEMORALIZED, AND INEFFECTIVE. ECEVIT PROMISED TO END THIS SITUATION. HE HAS NOT DONE SO; IN FACT, THE SITUATION IS MEASURABLY WORSE. (THE DEATH TOLL ALONE HAS VIRTUALLY DOUBLED.) HE
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ARGUES THAT STEPS ARE BEING TAKEN TO RESOLVE THE PROBLEM, THAT ARRESTS ARE BEING MADE WHERE THEY WERE NOT BEFORE, THAT SUSPECTS ARE BEING BROUGHT TO TRIAL, AND THAT THE RECENT SURGE IN VIOLENCE IS THE RESULT OF DESPERATION BY VIOLENT GROUPS WHO KNOW THEIR DAYS ARE NUMBERED. HE HAS RESISTED GROWING PRESSURE FOR MORE DRASTIC MEASURES, SUCH AS THE INSITUITION OF MARTIAL LAW, AND HAS INSISTED THAT NORMAL POLICE MEASURES WILL WORK.

B. AT THIS POINT MOST OF ECEVIT'S SUPPORTERS ARE STILL WITH HIM, AND THEY BELIEVE HE CAN BRING THINGS UNDER CONTROL. THEIR CONFIDENCE HAS BEEN SHAKEN SOMEWHAT BY THE FACT THAT ECEVIT'S ACCESSION TO POWER DID NOT IMMEDIATELY IMPROVE THE SITUATION, AND THEY (ALONG WITH ECEVIT) ARE BEGINNING TO LOOK FOR EXCUSES AND SCAPEGOATS. THEY HAVE ASSIGNED RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE RECENT UPSURGE OF VIOLENCE TO "THOSE WHO WANT TO DISCREDIT THE ECEVIT GOVERNMENT", BY WHICH THEY APPARENTLY MEAN THE OPPOSITION POLITICAL PARTIES, PARTICULARLY THE FAR-RIGHT NATIONALIST ACTION PARTY. IF THE VIOLENCE CONTINUES, THE BLAME IS LIKELY TO BE ASSIGNED MORE BROADLY AND COULD INCLUDE THE US.

5. FOREIGN POLICY

A. THE FOREIGN POLICY PROBLEMS THAT FACED THE ECEVIT GOVERNMENT BREAK DOWN INTO THREE CATEGORIES--CYPRUS,

GREEK-TURKISH RELATIONS, AND US-TURKISH RELATIONS--WHICH INTERACT TO A SUBSTANTIAL DEGREE. ECEVIT APPARENTLY BELIEVES THAT THESE PROBLEMS ARE MOST SUSCEPTIBLE TO EARLY SOLUTION AND THAT THEIR SOLUTION WOULD GIVE HIM POLITICAL CREDIT BOTH AT HOME AND ABROAD WHICH COULD BE HELPFUL IN DEALING WITH OTHER LESS TRACTABLE PROBLEMS, INCLUDING THE INTERNATIONAL ASPECT OF TURKEY'S ECONOMIC PROBLEMS. HE HAS THEREFORE
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CONCENTRATED MUCH OF HIS ATTENTION ON THESE PROBLEMS, AND HE CAN CLAIM SOME SUCCESSES. (THIS ANALYSIS FOCUSES ON THE DOMESTIC POLITICAL ASPECTS OF THE GOVERNMENT'S FOREIGN POLICY PERFORMANCE. IN A SEPARATE TELEGRAM, WE WILL ASSESS THAT PERFORMANCE AS IT AFFECTS US INTERSTS.)

B. CYPRUS. AS SOON AS HE TOOK OFFICE ECEVIT UNEQUIVOCALLY DECLARED HIS INTENTION TO SOLVE THE CYPRUS PROBLEM. HE UNILATERALLY ASSERTED A DE-LINKING OF THE CYPRUS PROBLEM AND US-TURKISH PROBLEMS AND PROMISED TO ASSIST THE TURKISH CYPRIOTS IN DEVELOPING CONSTRUCTIVE PROPOSALS ON BOTH THE CONSITUTIONAL TERRITRIAL ASPECTS OF THE CYPRUS PROBLEM. THE PROPOSALS MAY WELL NOT BE SUFFICIENTLY FORTH-COMING TO ENTICE THE GREEK CYPRIOTS BACK TO THE INTERCOMMUNAL TALKS, BUT ECEVIT SEEMS TO HAVE CONVINCED MOST OF THE WORLD THAT HE IS SINCERE IN HIS DESIRE TO RESOLVE THE PROBLEM. THUS, FOR THE FIRST TIME SINCE JULY 20, 1974, THE TURKISH SIDE HAS MANAGED TO CHALLENGE THE GREEK CYPRIOT SIDE FOR THE PUBLIC RELATIONS HIGH GROUND.

C. TURKEY-GREECE. ECEVIT PLACES GREAT STOCK IN PERSONA RELATIONSHIPS AS INSTRUMENTS OF FOREIGN POLICY. LIKE MOST TURKS, ECEVIT REMEMBERS THAT THE PERSONAL DEALINGS OF ATATURK AND VENEZELOS YIELDED A GENERATION OF GOOD RELATIONS. HE HOPED TO REPEAT THAT PERFORMANCE WITH CARAMANLIS. CARAMANLIS' RELUCTANT RESPONSE HAS DISAPPOINTED BUT NOT DETERRED ECEVIT. HE CONSIDERS THE MONTREUX SUMMIT TO HAVE BEEN A SUCCESSFUL BEGINNING AND HE IS APPARENTLY DETERMINED TO TRY TO FORCE CARAMANLIS EITHER TO COOPERATE OR TO ACCEPT BLAME FOR CONTINUED GREEK-TURKISH DISACCORD.

D. US-TURKEY. IT IS IN HIS DEALINGS WITH THE US THAT ECEVIT HAS GAINED THE MOST DOMESTIC POLITICAL CREDIT. FROM THE POINT OF VIEW OF THE TURKISH PUBLIC, ECEVIT HAS MANAGED TO PERSUADE THE US TO TAKE STEPS TO LIFT THE ARMS EMBARGO AND TO REVITALIZE THE BILATERAL RELATIONSHIP--AND
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HAS DONE IT ON HIS TERMS. HE HAS THUS PARTIALLY SATISFIED
(AT LEAST TEMPORARILY) BOTH THOSE WHO WERE CONCERNED ABOUT
THE DETERIORATED STATE OF TURKEY'S RELATIONS WITH THE US AND
THOSE WHO OPPOSE US TUTELAGE.

6. THE NEXT HUNDRED DAYS.

A. GENERAL. THE POLITICAL BALANCE SHEET FOR
ECEVIT'S FIRST HUNDRED DAYS HAS MORE CREDITS THAN DEBITS,
BUT THE QUESTION THAT NOW ARISES IN WHETHER ECEVIT CAN SUSTAIN
AND CONSOLIDATE THAT FAVORABLE POSITION. WE BELIEVE HE CAN--
BUT ONLY WITH DIFFICULTY.

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B. THE ECONOMY. ON THE ECONOMIC SIDE THE GOVERNMENT IS MAKING SUBSTANTIAL PROGRESS IN RATIONALIZING THE MESS IT INHERITED. AMONG THE PEOPLE THERE IS AN ABSTRACT RECOGNITION THAT THE PROCESS WILL INVOLVE SOME SACRIFICES. BUT WHEN THE REALITIES OF THE NEW MEASURES
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BEGIN TO AFFECT THE LIVING STANDARDS OF HIS SUPPORTERS,-- PARTICULARLY THE POORER ONES--ECEVIT'S POLITICAL CREDIT IS LEKELY TO FALL QUITE RAPIDLY. TO SOFTEN THE NEGATIVE POLITICAL IMPACT OF THE AUSTERITY MEASURES, HE WILL HOPE TO BE ABLE TO POINT TO NEW SUCCESSES IN OTHER FIELDS.

C. FOREIGN POLICY

(1) GENERAL. ECEVIT WILL PROBABLY CONTINUE TO RELY ON FOREIGN POLICY SUCCESSES TO KEEP HIS DOMESTIC POLITICAL CREDIT HIGH. WE SUSPECT HE WILL BE SUCCESSFUL. A FULL SCHEDULE OF FOREIGN TRAVEL--SOFIA, BONN, NEW YORK (FOR THE SSOD), WASHINGTON (TO PRESIDE OVER THE NATO SUMMIT AND POSSIBLY TO MEET AGAIN WITH CARAMANLIS), AND MOSCOW--WILL KEEP HIM POSITIVELY FIXED IN THE PUBLIC EYE AS A RESPECTED AND EFFECTIVE NATIONAL REPRESENTATIVE OF TURKEY.

(2) US-TURKISH RELATIONS. THE MAJOR TEST OF ECEVIT'S PERFORMANCE IN FOREIGN AFFAIRS DURING THE NEXT HUNDRED DAYS WILL BE HOW HE HANDLES THE US-TURKISH RELATIONSHIP. IF THE ADMINISTRATION'S EFFORT TO LIFT THE EMBARGO IS SUCCESSFUL, ECEVIT WILL GAIN GREAT CREDIT. HE WILL PROBABLY FEEL THE NEED TO KEEP HIS PARTY'S LEFT WING HAPPY BY BALANCING THE RESULTING IMPROVEMENT IN US-TURKISH RELATIONS WITH FURTHER EFFORTS WITH THE THIRD WORLD AND WITH TURKEY'S COMMUNIST NEIGHBORS, BUT THIS SHOULD BE RELATIVELY EASY TO ACCOMPLISH, PERHAPS BY SIGNING A "POLITICAL DOCUMENT" DURING HIS VISIT TO THE SOVIET UNION AND INTENSIFYING HIS THIRD WORLD CONTACTS. MUCH MORE DIFFICULT WOULD BE A POLITICALLY-EFFECTIVE REACTION TO A DEFEAT OF THE EFFORT TO LIFT THE EMBARGO. ECEVIT'S GROSS CHOICES IN SUCH CIRCUMSTANCES WOULD BE: (A) TO ACCEPT THE DEFEAT AND SOMEHOW TRY TO
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SALVAGE A RELATIONSHIP WITH THE US AND NATO THAT WOULD KEEP

TURKEY WITH THE WEST, OR (B) TO USE THE DEFEAT TO REORIENT TURKEY AWAY FROM THE WEST EITHER TOWARD THE THIRD WORLD OR THE COMMUNIST WORLD. FOR REASONS OF BOTH TEMPERAMENT AND IDEOLOGY, WE BELIEVE ECEVIT'S INITIAL INCLINATION WOULD BE TO REORIENT TOWARD THE THIRD WORLD. THE SHIFT FROM THE WEST WOULD BE TEMPERED BY TRADITION--AND BY SECURITY CONSIDERATIONS--BUT ECEVIT'S POLITICAL NEEDS WOULD PROBABLY LEAD HIM TO TAKE A POSITION BASED ON EMOTIONAL NATIONALISM WHICH WOULD EXCLUDE CONTINUED CLOSE COOPERATION WITH THE US AND PROBABLY NATO. THE EVENTUAL RESULT OF SUCH REORIENTATION MIGHT BE TO BRING TURKEY CLOSER TO THE SOVIET UNION, BUT WE BELIEVE ECEVIT WOULD RESIST THIS COURSE IN THE FIRST INSTANCE.

(3) CYPRUS, GREECE, TURKEY. THE POLITICAL CREDIT ECEVIT HAS GAINED AS A RESULT OF HIS EARLY INITIATIVES IS NOT LIKELY TO BE EXHAUSTED DURING THE NEXT HUNDRED DAYS. HE CAN CLAIM CREDIT FOR ANY PROGRESS AND CAN BLAME THE GREEKS AND GREEK CYPRIOTS FOR ANY SETBACKS.

D. DOMESTIC VIOLENCE. WE BELIEVE THE PRIMARY THREAT TO THE STABILITY OF THE ECEVIT GOVERNMENT IS THE CONTINUING INTERNAL SECURITY CRISIS. ECEVIT'S OPTIMISTIC PREDICTIONS OF AN EARLY IMPROVEMENT IN THE SITUATION MAY PROVE CORRECT--AND IF HE CAN HOLD ON UNTIL SUMMER HE SHOULD HAVE A FEW ADDITIONAL MONTHS OF RESPITE. BUT THERE IS LIKELY TO BE A LIMIT TO HOW LONG ECEVIT CAN RETAIN THE CONFIDENCE OF HIS OWN SUPPORTERS AND THE MILITARY IF THE LEVEL OF VIOLENCE IS NOT REDUCED SUBSTANTIALLY. A FEW MORE DRAMATIC AND EXCEPTIONALLY BLOODY INCIDENT IN THE NEXT HUNDRED DAYS COULD BRING THAT LIMIT INTO FOCUS.

7. GOVERNMENT STABILITY.

A. CHALLENGE FROM THE OPPOSITION. WE DO NOT CONSIDER THE ECEVIT GOVERNMENT TO BE VULNERABLE TO PARLIA-
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MENTARY POLITICAL CHALLENGE BY RIVAL POLITICAL PARTIES IN THE NEAR FUTURE. WITH A TRANSFER OF A DEPUTY FROM THE JP TO THE RPP APRIL 12, RPP STRENGTH IN THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY ROSE TO 215, ONLY 9 SHORT OF AN ABSOLUTE MAJORITY OF THE PRESENT MEMBERSHIP OF 447. WITH THE SEEMINGLY ASSURED SUPPORT OF 13 NON-RPP CABINET MEMBERS, ECEVIT ENJOYS A COMFORTABLE MARGIN BY RECENT TURKISH STANDARDS. JUSTICE PARTY MEMBERS--INCLUDING FORMER PRIME MINISTER DEMIREL--TALK PRIVATELY IN TERMS OF TWO OR THREE YEARS IN OPPOSITION.

B. MILITARY INTERVENTION. A CONTINUATION OF THE RECENT SPIRAL OF VIOLENCE COULD LEAD TO PRESSURES FOR MARTIAL LAW (WHICH ECEVIT WOULD ALMOST CERTAINLY REJECT) OR EVEN

MILITARY INTERVENTION. WE DO NOT, AT THIS POINT, THINK INTERVENTION IS LIKELY, BUT OF THE VARIOUS POSSIBLE ALTERNATIVES TO AN ECEVIT GOVERNMENT BROUGHT DOWN BY THE DOMESTIC VIOLENCE PROBLEM, IT IS THE MOST LIKELY ONE. (THE ALTERNATIVES TO THE ECEVIT GOVERNMENT WILL BE DEALT WITH IN DETAIL IN A SUBSEQUENT TELEGRAM.)

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8. ABILITY OF THE GOVERNMENT TO TAKE DIFFICULT DECISIONS

A. ALTHOUGH ECEVIT HAS A COMFORTABLE PARLIAMENTARY

MARGIN, THE QUESTION IS OFTEN ASKED WHETHER THAT MARGIN IS
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SOLID ENOUGH TO ALLOW ECEVIT TO REACH A SATISFACTORY AGREEMENT
ON CYPRUS. WE BELIEVE IT IS. ECEVIT ALMOST CERTAINLY
WILL CLAIM HE IS LIMITED IN WHAT HE CAN DO BY TURKISH PUBLIC
OPINION, BUT THE FACT IS THAT HE IS NOT BEING SERIOUSLY PRESSED
BY MOST OF THE OPPOSITION. HE, OF COURSE, WILL NEED TO
MIND THE POTENTIAL FUTURE POLITICAL EFFECTS OF WHATEVER HE
DOES, BUT THE CONCEPT OF A CYPRUS SETTLEMENT HAS RECENTLY
BECOME POPULAR IN TURKEY; AND ECEVIT HAS THE PRESENT
PARLIAMENTARY STRENGTH, POLITICAL SOPHISTICATION, AND LEADERSHIP
TO ENABLE HIM TO NEGOTIATE A GENEROUS (BY TURKISH STANDARDS)
CYPRUS SETTLEMENT--AND MAKE IT STICK.

B. TWO CAUTIONARY POINTS SHOULD BE MADE, HOWEVER;

(1) ECEVIT'S POLITICAL VULNERABILITY
WOULD BE SIGNIFICANT IF HE APPEARED TO BE ACTING IN RESPONSE
TO OUTSIDE PRESSURE; AND

(2) A SHARPLY NEGATIVE RESPONSE BY
THE GREEK CYPRIOTS TO TURKISH OVERTURES WILL GREATLY REDUCE
GOT ABILITY (AND WILL) TO KEEP TURKISH PUBLIC OPINION SUP-
PORTIVE OF A SOLUTION INVOLVING SIGNIFICANT TURKISH CONCESSIONS.

9. CONCLUSION.

A. THE CRUCIAL PROBLEM FOR TURKEY'S DEMOCRACY SEEMS
TO BE NOT WHETHER TURKS CAN PRODUCE POPULARLY ELECTED
GOVERNMENTS BUT WHETHER DEMOCRATIC TURKISH GOVERNMENTS
CAN GOVERN EFFECTIVELY. IN THIS RESPECT, THE ECEVIT EXPERIMENT
SEEMS ESPECIALLY PROMISING. AFTER YEARS OF DRIFT, THERE HAS
BEEN A SHARP UPTURN IN THE GOVERNMENT'S POLITICAL WILLINGNESS
AND ABILITY TO FACE UP TO THE COUNTRY'S REAL TROUBLES AND TO
TAKE DIFFICULT, POTENTIALLY UNPOPULAR DECISIONS. ECEVIT'S OWN
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LEADERSHIP, BOTH IN BUILDING PUBLIC SUPPORT AND IN MOVING
THE BUREAUCRACY, APPEARS TO BE THE KEY FACTOR.

B. ECEVIT TOOK OVER A COUNTRY IN CRISIS.
SPEAKING TO HIS PARTY CAUCUS IN LATE MARCH, HE DESCRIBED
THE ENORMITY OF THE PROBLEMS THAT HAD FACED HIS NEW GOVERNMENT
AND SAID HE COULD NOT PROMISE A SOLUTION IN 100 DAYS. HE
SAID THAT UNTIL NOW THE COUNTRY HAD ENJOYED A DEMOCRATIC

ALTERNATIVE TO THE GOVERNMENT IN POWER. THAT, HE SAID, IS NO LONGER THE CASE. FOR THE FORESEEABLE FUTURE, THERE IS NO DEMOCRATIC ALTERNATIVE TO THE PRESENT GOVERNMENT. THERE IS ONLY A LITTLE HYPERBOLE IN ECEVIT'S TATEMENT. IF HE AND HIS GOVERNMENT ARE NOT ABLE TO DEAL WITH THE PROBLEMS FACING THE COUNTRY, THE DEMOCRATIC REGIME COULD BE ENDANGERED. FORTUNATELY, IN DOMESTIC POLITICAL TERMS, ECEVIT IS DOING FAIRLY WELL--ESPECIALLY IN CONFRONTING THE ECONOMIC AND FOREIGN POLICY PROBLEMS. HOWEVER, AS NOTED EARLIER, THE ECONOMIC STABILIZATION MEASURES, PARTICULARLY THE PROPOSED TAX INCREASES, WILL ENTAIL SOME POLITICAL COSTS. HIS RECORD IN DEALING WITH THE DOMESTIC SECURITY PROBLEM IS LESS POSITIVE. HE HAS NOT YET RUN OUT OF TIME, BUT A FEW DRAMATIC EVENTS COULD FLATTEN THE TIME CUSHION HE NOW HAS. DOMESTIC SECURITY THUS REMAINS, IN OUR OPINION, THE LIKLIEST SOURCE OF POLITICAL CRISIS.

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